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Reid Hoffman's Post



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Over the last couple of weeks, some of my philanthropy has received increased attention. If that spotlight offers the chance to reinforce the importance of the rule of law, equality, and helping the disadvantaged, I'm compelled to take that opportunity. After all, these are not just my values, but American values—ones that are foundational to our democracy, our success, and our future.

In general, I prefer to talk about these values and ideas over commenting on specific gifts that I've made. But there is a theme to a number of them: protecting the rule of law from the threat posed by Donald Trump's scorched-earth legal methods.

In and out of court, women have been one of the main groups that Trump has singled out. As Franklin Foer has pointed out, Trump's hostility to women has been a dominant feature of his ideology for his entire adult life. Supporting women fighting for progress and justice in philanthropy, politics, and business has been a longstanding priority of mine, as is supporting America against the threat of Trump—a stance that I've not only made public, but also have prioritized over recent years.

I believe that the courts themselves, using facts and laws, should decide innocence and guilt. Trump has had many days in court; America and its citizens should have their say as well. And so I have been proud to help level the playing field in the courts for those whom Trump and his allies have attacked and bullied.

For instance, in addition to E. Jean Carroll, grantees I have supported include:

- Lisa Rosenberg, whose group Open the Government has helped train citizens on how to use Freedom of Information Act requests to expose government abuses against women and families;
- Third-party litigation support for clients of attorney Roberta Kaplan, who held the Charlottesville rioters accountable under the Ku Klux Klan Act, and who is now representing one of the many women who has credibly accused Trump of sexual violence; and
- Litigation under the Fourteenth Amendment to block insurrectionists from holding office.

While Trump's legal team has characterized my support of Carroll's lawsuit as "secret," I want to be clear that I've never taken any steps to hide the financial support that I have provided to this lawsuit after it started. Secondly, and more importantly, while media attention is focused on this specific story, let's not forget the overall point: the rule of law and the ideal that our courts are a mechanism of justice for all citizens, not just those with enough money and power to rig the game in their favor.

It's a mark of the dangers of our current politics when anyone tries to position the rule of law as an extreme political position. It's not. Rule of law is critical to justice, innovation, and human advancement—all of which make our country strong and are worth speaking up for.